



# PRESS NOTICE

## BILL NETTLES UNITED STATES ATTORNEY DISTRICT OF SOUTH CAROLINA

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**April 13, 2012**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **FORMER CITY EMPLOYEE SENTENCED FOR ACCEPTING KICKBACKS**

**Columbia, South Carolina----** United States Attorney Bill Nettles stated today that Damon McDuffie, age 35, of Columbia, South Carolina, was sentenced today in federal court in Columbia, South Carolina, for extorting, soliciting and accepting illegal kickbacks under color of law, a violation of 18 U.S.C. § 1951. United States District Judge Joseph F. Anderson, Jr. of Columbia sentenced McDuffie to 15 months in prison, to be followed by a three year term of supervised release. Judge Anderson also ordered McDuffie to make restitution to the City Of Columbia in the amount of \$12,330.00

McDuffie entered a guilty plea in December of 2011. Evidence presented at the plea and sentencing hearings established that McDuffie solicited and accepted

illegal payments from contractors while employed with the City of Columbia's Parks and Recreation Department in return for agreeing to steer city business. Despite prior convictions for forgery, possession of marijuana, disorderly conduct and multiple convictions for fraudulent checks, the City of Columbia hired McDuffie in 2002. McDuffie rose through the ranks of the Parks and Recreation Department, and was serving as Interim Director and Parks Planner at the time of McDuffie's October, 2010 indictment.

The federal investigation established that McDuffie began soliciting illegal kickbacks in 2006, and his illegal activities continued until the summer of 2010. The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and the State Law Enforcement Division (SLED) began an undercover investigation in 2009 after one of the contractors extorted by McDuffie came forward. This contractor indicated that he paid McDuffie over \$5,000.00 in return for McDuffie's assistance in steering a contract involving the refurbishment of the Riverfront Park footbridge. The contractor agreed to record conversations with McDuffie, and agents also gathered documentary evidence corroborating the allegations made by the contractor.

The case was investigated by FBI and SLED agents working on the FBI's Public Corruption Task Force. Assistant United States Attorney Mark C. Moore of the Columbia office prosecuted the case.

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